



2008
Annual
Report

Prince Edward Island
Environmental Advisory
Council



Prince Edward Island
Environmental
Advisory Council

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Honourable George Webster
Minister of Environment, Energy & Forestry
PO Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 7N8

Dear Mr. Webster:

In accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act*, I have the honour of presenting the Annual Report of the Environmental Advisory Council.

This report covers the period of January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Elmer MacDonald
Acting Chair

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 2
Environmental Advisory Council Terms of Reference	Page 2
General Comments	Page 3
Issues	Page 5
2008 Science Fair Winners	Page 7
Environmental Award Winners	Page 8
Appendix A	
<i>Environmental Advisory Council</i>	
<i>2008 Membership</i>	Page 10

Introduction

The Environmental Advisory Council is a group of individuals appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council to advise the Minister responsible for the environment on environmental matters.

Secretarial services for the Council are provided by staff of the Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry.

Environmental Advisory Council Terms of Reference

Section 4 (2) of the *Environmental Protection Act* sets out the Council's responsibilities. The Act states that:

The Council shall:

- (a) serve as an advisory board to the Minister responsible for the Environment;***
- (b) perform such functions as may be prescribed by regulations.***

The mandate for the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) as prescribed by the Act is somewhat general in order to be all encompassing. The Council was advised by the Minister that nothing of an environmental nature should be out of bounds for the Council to investigate. To better define the Environmental Advisory Council's mandate, the following terms of reference were approved by the Minister:

1. To advise the Minister Responsible for the Environment on matters referred to EAC by the Minister or the public under the *Environmental Protection Act*.
2. To prepare a report annually to the Minister on activities of the EAC.
3. To recognize individuals and groups who work to improve the environment and environmental knowledge.
4. To make recommendations to the Minister respecting opportunities for environmental improvement or protection programs or projects.
5. To recommend to the Minister public education programs or projects.

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6. To make recommendations to the Minister respecting support for community, private and non-government programs and projects.
 7. To advise the Minister on proposed and existing legislation as it relates to environmental protection and enhancement.
 8. To advise the Minister on such matters as the Minister may direct.
 9. To update the Minister on relevant research conducted on the environment.
 10. To promote public awareness of environmental issues.
 11. To make recommendations to the Minister on environmental awards.

General Comments

The Environmental Advisory Council had a busy year in 2008, with a diverse agenda. Council began the year with 10 members. Joanne LeBlanc-Arsenault and Leslie Cudmore completed their terms in October 2008.

Council reported to the Hon. George Webster, Minister of Environment, Energy and Forestry. Council had nine(one cancelled due to weather conditions) regular meetings during 2008. In addition, a number of special meetings of various subcommittees of Council were held, including the Environmental Awards and Science Fair Subcommittees.

Council endeavored to keep abreast of new developments and issues, and was fortunate to have knowledgeable people make presentations on some of these issues. A list of speakers and their topics of discussion is presented in the table on the following page.

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Guests/Speakers</i>	<i>Issues Discussed</i>
January	Jim Young, Director Water Management Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry	Watershed Report Update
February	Kate MacQuarrie, Director Forests, Fish and Wildlife Division Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry Randy Dibblee, Biologist Forests, Fish and Wildlife Division Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry	Moving to Restore a Balance in Island Forests Beavers in PEI
March	Erin Taylor Climate Change Coordinator Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry	Climate Change

April	Mike Proud, Manager Office of Energy Efficiency Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry Rosanne MacFarlane, Biologist, Forests Fish and Wildlife Division Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry	Energy Efficiency Programs Beavers
May	Shawn Hill Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Coordinator Water Management Division Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry	Alternative Land Use Services Program
September	Shawn Hill	Alternative Land Use Services Program - Update

Issues

During the year, the Council members discussed many environmental issues, some of which it dealt with in some detail. These are listed below:

As a result of recommendations in *We are all downstream We are all upstream We are all part of a watershed - A Report on the Public Consultations on Managing Land and Water on a Watershed Basis*, several initiatives were implemented over the year.

A Watershed Planning Conference was held on March 29, 2008. The facilitator was Elmer MacDonald, who also co-chaired the Report. The goal of the conference was to provide educational information to watershed groups, to discuss a watershed alliance/coalition and to provide an avenue for watershed groups to network with each other. The conference was attended by fifty-two people, with twenty-three watershed groups being represented.

There was another conference held November 29, 2008, for members of the watershed alliance. The goal of the conference was to discuss the merits of an Island-wide watershed association, to discuss watershed planning experiences and for watershed groups to network with each other. Fifty-six people attended the conference, with twenty-seven watershed groups being represented.

In June 2008 it was announced that "A total of \$520,000 was awarded to watershed groups in 2008/09, continuing a pattern of increase. Watershed work received \$120,000 in 2006/07 \$120,000 in the spring budget of 2007/08 and an increase of \$350,000 in the fall of 2007 - making a total of \$470,000 for the 2007/08 budget year."

On April 24, 2008, the Alternative Land Use Program (ALUS) was announced. ALUS is a voluntary program for landowners and farmers that protects PEI water, fish and wildlife habitat. This initiative will reduce soil, erosion and siltation of streams, improve water quality and improve and increase wildlife habitat.

The Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry offered clinics for free tests for water nitrate content. These community-based "nitrate clinics" which took place in January and February of 2008 were held across PEI. This is the second round of clinics, the first round was held in November and December of 2007.

Other Items

Other topics that were discussed were:

- *Agricultural Crop Rotation Act* and Regulations
- Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Program
- Beavers
- Beverage Container Program
- Blueberry fields and best management practices
- Buffer zones
- Climate change
- Energy efficiency in new schools
- Erosion
- Honey bees
- *Lands Protection Act*
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Buildings
- Office of Energy Efficiency
- Organic farming
- Prince Edward Island's Forest Policy
- Public transit system
- PCBs
- Report on the Commission on Nitrates in Groundwater
- Sewage Disposal Systems Regulations
- Solar power
- Sugar beets
- Watersheds
- Wind Development Plan
- Wind energy
- Windmills
- Wood pellet heating

2008 Science Fair Winners

The Environmental Advisory Council takes an active interest in the annual Provincial Science Fair sponsored by the University of Prince Edward Island. Involvement has included helping judge and award prizes to participants whose projects demonstrate a high level of understanding or innovative approaches to environmental issues. In 2008, the Dr. Leon Loucks Environmental Awards were presented to entries in the junior, intermediate and senior categories with prize money of \$80, \$50 and \$30 awarded to first, second and third place winners respectively. The 2008 winners are as follows:

DR. LEON LOUCKS ENVIRONMENTAL PRIZES

Senior Category:

- 1st Edward Gao, Colonel Gray Senior High
- *Reactions of Balsam Firs to Pollutants*
- 2nd Jelisa Gallant, Summerside Intermediate
- *The Fuel of the Future*

Intermediate Category:

- 1st Haley Whelan, Stonepark Intermediate
- *Ouvrez la Fenetre a la Perte de Chaleur*
- 2nd Olivia Fraser and Ashely Wright, Summerside Intermediate
- *How Do Diapers Infect the Environment?*
- 3rd Matthew Dingwell, Morell Regional High
- *Clean From Ground to Glass*

Junior Category:

- 1st Jerika Ramsay, Glen Stewart Elementary
- *Can We Stop Rising Nitrate Levels?*
- 2nd Alana Jewel, LM Montgomery Elementary
- *Soil Texture Showdown*
- 3rd Heather Harris, Queen Elizabeth Elementary
- *Acid Rain*

Environmental Award Winners

Since its inception in 1987, the Environmental Advisory Council has recognized citizens for their special commitment to the environment through the PEI Environmental Awards.

In June, Awards were presented by Lieutenant Governor Barbara A. Hagerman and the Hon. George Webster to the following:

Honourable Gilbert Clements

Honourable Gilbert Clements was elected to the P.E.I. Legislature in 1970 as Member for the 4th Kings District and was named Minister of Municipal Affairs, Environment & Tourism, Parks & Conservation in 1974 serving until 1978. This made him the first environment minister to serve in any Canadian province or territory. After serving in other portfolios as Minister and as Opposition Critic, Gilbert Clements served a second term in environment, acting as Minister of Finance & Minister of the Environment from 1989 to 1993.

Under his watch as Environment Minister, Gilbert Clements worked with Ducks Unlimited in order to open up many dams for fish passage. He fought and stopped a gravel-washing operation that had dumped silt into ten miles of the Valleyfield Stream. Minister Clements was not opposed to using the budget to promote worthwhile projects. Under his leadership, a pilot was created to improve fish habitat in the Montague Watershed. He established the Morell River Conservation Zone and created Wildlife Management Areas at Rollo Bay, Montague and New Glasgow.

Minister Clements was responsible for the approval of the Natural Areas Protection Act in 1980s and, in his role as Minister of Finance, he helped create tax relief that allowed the Island Nature Trust to be exempted from paying property taxes on the land it protected. Gilbert Clements's terms as Environment Minister saw many important measures taken that would protect the Island environment from hazards.

He began the effort with a program to remove abandoned and derelict car bodies from Island fields, brought in efforts to remove or replace underground fuel tanks, enacted used oil regulations, lead acid battery regulations and an environmental tax that would pay for proper disposal of used tires.

From 1995 to 2001, Gilbert Clements was Prince Edward Island's Lieutenant Governor and continued to make the environment and conservation key components of his work. It was during that period that he was named the "Official Patron" of the Prince Edward Wildlife Federation. Another accomplishment of the Honourable Gilbert Clements' career was the creation in 1987 of the Prince Edward Island Environmental Awards to honour people who have contributed to the protection of the Island's environment.

Diane Griffin

Diane Griffin has worked for the environment as a civil servant, a researcher and a volunteer with several non-governmental organizations working for the protection of ecologically important areas throughout Canada. From her early work as a resource planner with Prince Edward Island's Provincial Parks in the 1970s and her nine years as natural areas coordinator for the province of Alberta through her work as executive director of the Island Nature Trust and her service as the Island's Deputy Minister of Environment, Dianne Griffin has worked for the recognition and preservation of vital natural areas. Dianne has worked as a volunteer, director and leader with a wide range of groups including the Canadian Nature Federation, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Bird Studies Canada and the Natural History Society of Prince Edward Island.

A highlight of Dianne Griffin's work was her success in getting the Greenwich Dunes territory added to the holdings Prince Edward Island National Park. As head of the Island Nature Trust, she intervened with provincial officials to stop a developer's proposal to convert the Greenwich area into a time-share development and later lobbied the provincial and federal governments in order to arrange a land-swap that saw the developer gain some provincially-owned land while the Greenwich property became part of the Prince Edward Island National Park. For the past several years, Dianne Griffin has been a partner in the IRIS Group, a consulting firm specializing in environmental and heritage issues.

Harvey Livingstone

For 41 years, Harvey Livingstone has operated Island Auto Salvage and Island Auto Supply on Brackley Point Road in Charlottetown. His business is taking cars and trucks that have outlived their usefulness then reselling the parts that are still in demand and selling what he can of the rest as scrap steel. It's not a business that immediately summons up images of clean air and soil, but Harvey Livingstone has consistently taken steps to make certain his business was operated to the highest environmental standards. On the property of Island Auto Salvage, Livingstone and his employees take measures to contain gasoline, oils, antifreeze, battery acids and air conditioning products that can leak from a wrecked automobile. At the same time, he's made certain that steel, aluminum and plastics were sent on for recycling and reuse.

Harvey Livingstone isn't somebody who was waiting to be recognized for environmental work, but he's attracted praise as someone who worked to do a clean job in an industry that some people would dismiss as a scrap dealership or a wrecking yard. As the nomination for Harvey Livingstone stated, "In his pursuit of a successful business he has protected P.E.I. soil and water from the impact of derelict vehicles. He is a fine example of a person who has identified a problem, reduced the impact and recycled manufactured product and avoided a potential environmental problem."

Morell Adventurers

The Morell Adventurers is the creation of Kim Bailey, a school counselor at Morell Consolidated School. As part of her position, Kim Bailey is asked to work with her students in collaboration with outside agencies. But outside her regular duties, Ms. Bailey continues to help the school by organizing extra-curricular activities that connect students with the natural world. One part of her work has been the Adventurers Club which brings together 35 students from all grade levels for biweekly after-school activities. Students in the Adventurers Club put on backpacks and leave school property for excursions that encourage them to connect with the natural world around them.

In April, the Adventurers Club took the lead during National Wildlife Week by having club members deliver daily messages to the student body telling them about simple steps they could take to protect the environment in their daily lives. Right now Kim Bailey and the Morell Adventurers are partnering with the Macphail Woodlot on a plan to naturalize the school property in order to create a habitat for songbirds and other wildlife. At the same time, the Adventurers are assisting a local environmentalist with wetland management in the Morell area. Kim Bailey believes that early exposure leads to future interest and appreciation of the natural world. With a very strong attendance rate and growing interest among other students at Morell Consolidated, the Adventurers Group is a living example of the way the environmental leadership can turn young minds toward protection of the natural world.

The Town of Stratford

The Town of Stratford is Prince Edward Island's fastest growing community with a constantly increasing population and a resulting high demand for land use, water resources, wastewater management, community services and recreation. In this demanding environment, the Town has committed itself to work towards becoming a sustainable community.

The community's town hall is an example of Stratford's commitment to environmental sustainability. The new building is heated with geo-thermal energy, and it has energy-efficient lighting, low-flow plumbing fixtures and other features to reduce the amount of water and energy used. The Town of Stratford does not allow cosmetic pesticides on its properties - including the Town Centre, parks and utility sites. The Town has adopted an aggressive strategy of eliminating potential sources of drinking water contamination and has committed itself to sustainable land use planning in the new Town Core area plan.

Other efforts include a sustainability planning and decision-making framework aimed at guiding the Town toward sustainability in its actions and delivery of an annual report on progress to sustainability. A sustainable Economic Development Officer has been hired to start work in Stratford in June and the community has set aside money to begin a public transit system this August.

The Town's ambitions don't end there. Stratford is exploring the use of wind turbines to power its Town Centre and the operations of its sewage treatment lagoon. As the nominator says, "Stratford is embracing sustainability because it cares about future generations and wants to tread more lightly on the earth."

Greenfield Elementary School

The St. Teresa's Environmental School Challenge was established by the Environmental Advisory Council as a way of encouraging school classes across the province to take on the role of environmental leaders in their schools and communities. There are classes in the province who are rising to the challenge and making the environment part of the learning experience.

This year's winner of the St. Teresa's School Challenge is the Green Team at Greenfield Elementary School in Summerside. Hundreds of interested students have become part of this team and for five years have worked toward enhancing their school grounds and protecting the environment. Some are part of the school's garden club, some help out by picking up garbage, but the Green Team as a whole is committed to making a difference in its community.

The Green Team has attracted financial support from the Canadian Wildlife Federation and gets ample help from staff, parents and the school community. For two years running, the Green Team has been part of the environmental big leagues - working with the Sierra Club on efforts that saw school children promoting environmental awareness and action. Students have planted seedlings around the school, have created and maintained a Peace Garden on school grounds and have shown the great improvements can be achieved if enough people each do a small part. Under the leadership of teachers like Donna Dunsmore, Huguette Hartman and Jennifer Brant, Greenfield Elementary School's Green Team is planting seeds today that will grow into lifelong environmental commitments.

Appendix A
Environmental Advisory Council
2008 Membership

Mr. Elmer MacDonald, Acting Chair
Borden Carlton

Mr. Don Matheson
Oyster Bed Bridge

Dr. James Kemp, Acting Vice-chair
Wheatley River

Mr. Murray Cook
Stanhope

Joanne LeBlanc-Arsenault
Union Corner (to October 2008)

Mr. Patrick Birtwistle
Stratford

Gwen Wyand/Mel Gass
Federation of PEI Municipalities

Mr. Bruce MacNeill
Beach Point

Ms. Leslie Cudmore
Charlottetown (to October 2008)

Mr. Alan Hicken
South Pinette